

## Title: Semantics without Intentions: Demonstratives, Shared Proper Names, and Salience

The aim of the project is to formulate theories of meaning for demonstrative expressions (such as *that*, *this*, *he*) — whose uses are often accompanied by physical acts of demonstration — and proper names. The main impact will be on analyzing the role of speaker's intentions, which in the case of demonstratives are often considered to be relevant in the process of reference determination. Similar theses can be found in the literature on proper names, especially in attempts at solving the problem of how the reference of names shared by many objects is determined. In other words, the standard view is that the factor making my use of the name *Michael Jordan* refer to the famous basketball player, and not e.g. to some unknown to me farmer from Mississippi who bears the same name, is the intention to refer to the basketball player that I have during the utterance of the name.

The leading thesis of my project is that the standard picture is wrong with regard to both of the aforementioned types of expressions. In the place of intentions, I am suggesting contextual salience at the moment of evaluation, which would objectively, without any help from intentions, make a certain object the reference of a particular use of a proper name or demonstrative.

The additional novelty that my project is planning to contribute to the philosophical debates on the above types of expressions is highlighting an ignored phenomenon of the so-called relativity of demonstratives and, perhaps, also proper names. This relativity consists in the possibility of the same use of a proper name to have a different reference relative to two contexts with different hierarchies of salience.

Provided that for the theories I am proposing the notion of *salience* is crucial, the last part of my project is to use the game-theoretical notion of *Schelling points* to analyze it more closely. These points are objects, places, etc., that for non-obvious, non-mathematical reasons are correct choices in so-called coordination games. For example, when subjects are promised a small prize for independently choosing the same side of the coin as their partner, around 80% of people choose heads, arguably because of its salience, which makes heads the Schelling point for this game. Given that Schelling points for different groups of people or different details of a particular coordination game are determined by cultural factors, shared experience, etc., it seems that this notion that has been relatively well researched by economists and linguists can shed new light on the cognate, philosophical notion of salience.